CLAIMS

1 (canceled).

2 (currently amended). A device for introducing state changes in athletic activities which comprises:

~~a time-varying device state; said state being comprised of~~ at least one binary variable, said variable(s) encoding the device states;

a time varying value, the current device state, encoded by the binary variable(s);

a display; said display presenting the current device state in a form that the athlete may interpret as a change in the athletic environment;

a means for setting the device; said means determining the timing and order in which the device transitions between device states, and the average time spent in each device state;

a controller; said controller reading the device settings, ~~maintaining the device state~~ transitioning between device states in accordance with those settings, and communicating the ~~resulting time-varying~~ current device state to the display;

an interruptible power source;

a durable case; said durable case being appropriate for an athletic activity.

3 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein the controller utilizes a microprocessor.

4 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein the display comprises sets of differently colored LEDs.

5-10 (canceled).

11 (currently amended). A method for the training of athletes and the playing of athletic games comprising the steps of:

(a) setting the ~~manner in which~~ mean frequency of transitions between device states, the minimum hold time and the average time spent in each device state, and the order of the device state ~~is to be varied in time~~ transitions;

(b) the device varying its current device state in accordance with those settings;

(c) the device displaying said current device state to the athletes in a form interpretable by them as a change of the environmental state within the context of the current athletic ~~activity;~~ activity.

~~(d) the athletes reacting to the provided environmental state information as appropriate for the current athletic activity.~~

12-21 (canceled).

22 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein a dial controls the mean frequency of transitions between device states.

23 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein a dial sets the minimum hold time spent in each device state before a transition is permitted.

24 (currently amended). A device according to claim **2**, wherein a switch sets the ~~device state order to be~~ order of transitions between device states as sequential or random.

25 (currently amended). A device according to claim **2**, wherein ~~the occupancy~~ an occupancy value is set for each device state, said occupancy values ~~determine~~ determining the average time spent in each device state.

26 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein the interruptible power source is a removable battery.

27 (previously presented). A device according to claim **2**, wherein a switch may interrupt the power.

28 (currently amended). A device according to claim **2**, wherein ~~each set of LEDs is~~ the display comprises sets of LEDs arranged in ~~a ring~~ rings around a conical case.

29 (currently amended). A device according to claim **2**, wherein ~~each set of LEDs has a different color~~ the display comprises sets of differently colored LEDs arranged with each set in a colored ring around a conical case.

30 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the order of the device ~~states~~ state transitions is random and the timing of the device state transitions is random.

31 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the order of the device ~~states~~ state transitions is sequential and the timing of the device state transitions is random.

32 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the order of the device ~~states~~ state transitions is random and the timing of the device state transitions is periodic.

33 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the order of the device ~~states~~ state transitions is sequential and the timing of the device state transitions is periodic.

34 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the athletic activity is a soccer dribbling ~~drill and the four states of the device~~ drill, the device utilizes four device states, and these device states correspond to the environmental states: "do not pass", "pass on the right", "pass on the left", and "pass on either side".

35 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the athletic activity is a basketball ~~drill and the four states of the device~~ drill, the device utilizes four device states, and these device states correspond to the environmental states: "left side layup", "right side layup", "shoot from the top of the key", and "shoot immediately".

36 (currently amended). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the athletic activity is a baseball pitching ~~drill and the four states of the device~~ drill, the device utilizes four device states, and these device states correspond to the environmental states: "throw a curve", "throw a slider", "throw a fastball", "throw out the runner at first base".